**Season 17: Status Quo  
Debating the 2016-2017 Stoa Policy Resolution**

The following articles and worksheets correlate with Unit IV of Monument Publishing’s *Blue Book for Policy Debate*. Study this resource much like you studied the model resolutions in Unit III. Become incredible learners of the year’s policy debate resolution, this addendum being your initial launch into the debate season.

**“Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reform its agriculture and/or food safety policy in the United States.”**

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Status Quo of Agriculture and Food Safety Policy



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Stoa’s 2016-2017 Policy Resolution:

“*Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reform its agriculture and/or food safety policy in the United States.*”

The following two parts cover the most significant events and policies in the status quo of “agriculture and/or food safety policy in the United States,” as listed in the Stoa resolution.

Part I: Status Quo of US Agriculture Policy

In this chapter we discuss some of the current issues likely to appear in Affirmative cases during this academic year. It’s not intended to be an exhaustive list, but merely some highlights of common case topics that you are likely to see, which may give you some ideas for cases or for things to expect when going Negative.

The 2014 Farm Bill

Status Quo policy on many of the biggest issues in agriculture are governed by the Agricultural Act of 2014, better known as the “Farm Bill.”[[1]](#footnote-2) The most well-known feature of the legislation was the elimination of direct payments as subsidies to farmers. These direct subsidies were replaced with subsidized crop insurance, whereby farmers can buy, at drastically reduced cost, insurance against declines in the value of their crop or loss of income due to whatever forces might cause such loss. It was intended to move toward a system intended to ensure help only in times of need rather than just constantly giving free money all the time. Critics argue that as long as the costs of farming are subsidized, farming will continue to be a drain on the taxpayers and an inefficient use of money that could have gone elsewhere in the economy.

Other Federal Market Interventions

Congress can’t resist intervening in the markets for various specific crops. While the tobacco program was abolished in 2004, other programs for commodities like milk, sugar, cotton, and even raisins (the “National Raisin Reserve”!) are still ongoing, designed to guarantee farmers a rate of return and protect them against downturns in the market or from foreign competition.

In addition to the cost to taxpayers, these programs cost consumers in the form of higher prices. They also may drive “downstream” companies (manufacturers that use the crops as inputs in their production of other goods) out of the U.S. to places like Canada or Mexico, where commodity prices are lower.

Agriculture and Energy Policy

In the History chapter, I mentioned the RFS (Renewable Fuel Standard) that requires blending of ethanol (the product of distillation of agricultural inputs, largely corn). Although ethanol subsidies were abolished some years ago, the Farm Bill also contains $880 million in subsidies for turning crops into biofuels. Programs include the Biorefinery Assistance Program and the Biomass Crop Assistance Program.

Turning edible crops like corn into fuel is controversial for several reasons, the most heart-wrenching of which is that hungry people somewhere in the world could have eaten what we are pumping into our gas tanks. Affirmatives may have various squirrely ideas about other types of biofuels that could be used to provide motor vehicle fuel (e.g. switchgrass, algae, cooking oil / biodiesel, sugar cane ethanol). All of these would probably already be on the market today if they were truly economically viable. The currently low price of crude oil makes it difficult to bring new fuels onto the market, since their cost of production has to be very low to compete with cheap oil. And you might want to check the details of the various existing federal programs: there’s a good chance the federal government is already subsidizing whatever unusual fuel source the Affirmative is promoting.

Food Stamp Reform

During the Great Recession a few years back, the federal government relaxed eligibility standards for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, better known as Food Stamps), due to the perceived crisis in poverty and unemployment. One of the changes was suspending the requirement that able-bodied adults without dependents (also known as ABAWDs) had to be working, looking for work, going to school, or doing voluntary community service in order to earn their eligibility for food stamps. You don’t have to think very long to imagine what happened when those rules were suspended: a lot of people signed up to get free stuff without working for it. States that have started reimposing the work rule (like Kansas and Maine) have discovered something amazing: when work is required for food stamps, a lot of people suddenly don’t need them anymore and drop out of the program.

Other reforms in addition to restoring the work requirement could include additional efforts to change eligibility to reduce participation by those not truly in need, as well as new safeguards to reduce fraud. There could also be reforms about the types of food eligible for purchase with food stamp funds, to improve nutrition and avoid taxpayer subsidies for junk food.

Environmental Concerns

It seems certain there will be Affirmative cases this year that will reform agriculture policy with a goal of reducing farming’s impact on the environment. While farming seems like a peaceful and innocuous activity, a lot can go wrong when the entire ecosystem is viewed comprehensively.

Think about what happens to all the millions of pounds of fertilizing chemicals spread onto farms across the nation every year. Ultimately, all of those chemicals end up somewhere, and many of them are washed from small streams into bigger rivers and ultimately into places like the Gulf of Mexico or the Chesapeake Bay. When the chemicals arrive at their final ocean destination, they fuel the growth of algae, which can remove the oxygen out of a large region of the ocean (a “dead zone”).

Concentrated Animal Feed Operations (CAFOs) also pose environmental hazards. The gases they emit not only smell bad but in sufficient concentration can be toxic to human health and life. Animals produce huge quantities of waste daily, much of it stored in foul-smelling lagoons on site – creating huge risks if the lagoon walls break or a storm spreads their contents into neighboring lands or waters.

Other areas of environmental concern include farmland itself, its preservation, and its quality. Preventing soil erosion could be an important topic, given the devastating effects of the Dust Bowl in the 1930s, before people realized how fragile the layer of topsoil really was until it all blew away. Government may or may not have a role to play in incentivizing farmers to take land out of farm production and move it into conservation uses. And protection of wetlands is a common recurring theme among the environmentally aware. Wetlands could be threatened either by farm encroachment or by chemical fertilizers used in farming.

Water and Drought

The recent historic drought and water shortages in California called our attention to the supply and allocation of this vital commodity. In the West, agricultural water supplies are often controlled, subsidized or regulated by some combination of state and federal governments. The federal government has spent billions of dollars over the years piping and pumping fresh water into Western agricultural regions that would otherwise be deserts. This questionable practice – why not just grow the crops in parts of the country where it rains? – often goes unquestioned by taxpayers and public policymakers. Perhaps the drought conditions are a wake-up call for changes in public policy.

There may even be proposals for policies specific to California to resolve the high water usage of agriculture in that state, since agriculture consumes such a high percentage of that state’s total water supply. Negatives might want to research “California state counterplans,” whereby the state of California solves the problem on their own (and in ways that go beyond agriculture, since the Negative is not limited by the resolution) in some better way than through federal action.

School Lunches

The US Department of Agriculture funds the federal school lunch program, which offers funding to schools to pay for their school lunches on the condition that the schools follow rules issued by USDA. Schools can opt out if they choose, but the price of ignoring the rules is declining the free money. Few school districts can refuse the offer of free money from Washington.

A federal law passed in 2010, the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act, set new detailed standards for the content of school lunches for all schools receiving federal money for the lunch program. The standards took effect a few years after passage and are now causing some uproar among students as they revolt against (or simply throw away) the foods forced onto their plates by federal fiat. A few school districts have even decided it isn’t worth it and have dropped out of the federal school lunch program.

First Lady Michelle Obama (whose kids attend a private school) was a big champion of the changes, expecting them to be a helpful step toward reducing childhood obesity. Instead, the standards have resulted in massive waste, as students are required to take onto their plates foods they don’t like, which immediately end up in the trash. A bill currently pending in Congress would repeal the HHFKA nutrition standards and restore more local control over school lunches.

Cattle Grazing

The violent incidents involving the Bundy family in Oregon over ranching on federal lands made headlines recently and called attention to federal grazing policies. While Cliven Bundy was a hero to some for “standing up” to the evil federal government, dig a little deeper and you’ll find the truth is more nuanced. Bundy was offended that the federal government was charging him anything to graze his cattle on public lands, and refused to pay the already subsidized, below market rates offered to cattle ranchers. The myth of the rugged individualist might be shattered when he demands the public give him his livelihood for free.

Numerous reforms are possible to resolve ongoing concerns about the degradation of Western federal rangelands that are currently open to cattlemen who buy permits. Permit prices are considered by many to be artificially set too low, encouraging over-grazing and offering subsidies to ranchers at public expense. Some advocate privatizing the grazing rights and simply selling them at auction, letting markets determine what grazing rights are worth, and capturing for the public their true value. Of course, privatizing federal lands themselves on a wide scale would be another option, perhaps as a Negative counterplan, since it wouldn’t be an agricultural policy.

Vertical Integration and Antitrust Action

Vertical integration refers to the corporate practice of a single company buying up all the steps in an industrial process from the raw materials to processing, manufacturing, wholesaling, and even to the retailing. For over 100 years there have been concerns about large corporations gaining monopoly, oligopoly, and/or monopsony[[2]](#footnote-3) price-setting power by dominating the supply chain in the meat business. “Antitrust” action refers to federal enforcement of anti-monopoly laws (some of which date back to the 1890s) to break up businesses that control “too large” a share of any individual market. As early as 1902, Pres. Theodore Roosevelt was advocating antitrust action to break up the “beef trust,” the term for consolidation of the meat market into a single corporate entity, or a small group of such entities colluding together as one.

Those same complaints can be heard today. Consumer advocates argue that consolidation is hurting consumers by raising retail prices of meat in the grocery store. Small farmers complain that consolidation puts them up against monopsonies that will not pay them fairly and leave them no alternative competitive markets in which to sell their products.

Worksheet for Part I: Status Quo of US Agriculture Policies

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Read Part I. Answer the following in the spaces provided.

1. What is the most well-known feature of the Agricultural Act of 2014, better known as the “Farm Bill”? What do the critics say about this?

2. Intervention into commodity markets cost money, but how else does intervention cost taxpayers?

3. What is thought to be the most heart-wrenching controversy over ethanol?

4. What standard from the 1990s imposed on food stamp eligibility was suspended during the Great Recession? What was the result?

5. Are agricultural policies that help the environment inherently good? What should affirmative teams do to show their policy will help the environment?

6. Water and drought has been a significant problem in California. How might a negative team respond to an affirmative case that attempts to solve for significant water shortages in the West?

7. What has been Michelle Obama’s signature policy during her husband’s administration? Why is a bill currently pending in Congress to repeal the policy?

8. Who was called a hero in Oregon concerning federal lands last year in the news? How were the details of his heroism more nuanced?

9. What are some of the solutions offered that could resolve ongoing concerns about the degradation of Western federal rangelands?

10. What is vertical integration? How do anti-trust laws solve for the problems this may cause?

Answers for Part I: Status Quo of US Agriculture Policies

1. The most well-known feature of the Farm Bill was the elimination of direct payments as subsidies to farmers. Critics argue that as long as the costs of farming are subsidized, farming will continue to be a drain on the taxpayers and an inefficient use of money that could have gone elsewhere in the economy.

2. In addition to the cost to taxpayers, these programs cost consumers in the form of higher prices. They also may drive “downstream” companies (manufacturers that use the crops as inputs in their production of other goods) out of the U.S. to places like Canada or Mexico, where commodity prices are lower.

3. What is thought to be the most heart-wrenching controversy over ethanol is the fact that hungry people somewhere in the world could have eaten what we pump into our gas tanks.

4. The standard removed was the requirement that able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) had to be working, looking for work, going to school, or doing voluntary community service in order to earn their eligibility for food stamps. The result was that a lot of people signed up without having to work for it.

5. Agricultural policies that help the environment are not inherently good. Affirmative teams should prove their cases both help the environment as well as overcome any unintended consequence their case may cause.

6. The negative could solve for significant water shortages in the West by running a counterplan. What that plan may be may vary, but one obvious one would be something that California does for itself (not the US government).

7. Michelle Obama’s signature policy has been the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA). Congress is considering repealing the policy because a significant portion of the food provided is thrown out and wasted.

8. The “hero” in Oregon was Cliven Bundy who stood up to the federal government. While he was called a hero, details explain how he was offended that the federal government was charging him to graze his cattle on public lands.

9. Some of the solutions offered that could solve ongoing concerns about the degredation of Western federal rangelands include increasing permit prices to reduce over-grazing, offering subsidies to ranchers, and privatizing grazing rights.

10. Vertical integration refers to the corporate practice of a single company buying up all the steps in an industrial process from the raw materials to processing, manufacturing, wholesaling, and even to the retailing. Anti-trust laws force break ups of businesses that control “too large” a share of an individual market.

Part II: Status Quo of US Food Safety Policy

In no particular order, we present below some brief discussion of current issues that may come up in debates about food safety. These aren’t suggested as an exhaustive list of every possible issue, but merely highlights of some of the most common material available for your consideration on this broad topic. It is possible some of these may give you ideas about Affirmative cases you could write. Even if not, you should familiarize yourself with these ideas and do some background reading, and briefing, on your own, since other debaters will probably be writing cases on these issues.

Genetically Engineered (GE) / Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO)

Humans have been modifying plants and animals since time immemorial, through selective breeding and hybridization. Ancient and modern farmers have often selected plants or animals with desired characteristics and bred them with others to increase the population with the desired traits.

Genetic engineering, say many, simply follows this ancient tradition and continues hybridization down new pathways. The resulting increases in crop yield, resistance to pests, and lowered requirement for inputs will be the key to feeding a planet whose population continues to grow, and for which food supplies must increase to avoid widespread starvation.

Others worry that such tampering with genes goes way beyond anything ever seen before and introduces new and potentially catastrophic risks. “Frankenstein”-like monsters may be created that could get released into the world of nature and destroy their “normal” cousins and possibly other parts of the ecosystem. There’s also concern about potential health risks from eating such foods, though no scientifically conclusive studies have yet found any harm.

This issue is heating up as science advances and more and more genetically engineered crops come onto the market. In addition, in late 2015, the US FDA finally approved, after 20 years of study, the sale of the first genetically modified animal (a fast-growing salmon) for consumption in the U.S. Congress reacted a couple months later by quickly taking it back off the market with new legislation.

There are at least four possible policy responses to these trends. First, we could do nothing, trust that GMOs impose no safety risk, and let the market develop as it will. Second, we could allow them to continue but impose labeling requirements so that consumers can be better informed and choose to avoid them if they wish. Third, we could set new standards for testing GMOs, to provide better assurance about their safety, both for the environment and for the consumer. Finally, we could simply ban them.

Antibiotics

Studies show that around three quarters of all antibiotics used in the U.S. annually are used on farm animals, not humans. Farm animals are routinely fed antibiotics every day as a preventive measure, and because animals so treated tend to grow bigger faster, probably because their growth is not slowed down as often by disease or parasites.

In Europe, legislation has moved farms away from routine antibiotics, due to the inherent risk of the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Drug resistance occurs when a few bad bacteria survive the initial onslaught of the antibiotic and reproduce. In succeeding generations, the resistance is inherited, leading to a new generation of bacteria that do not respond to that specific antibiotic. Many fear that excessive antibiotic use on farms will create resistant bacteria that will spread to humans and cause incurable diseases, with disastrous consequences.

The FDA has already published voluntary guidelines intended to restrict farm antibiotic use. Critics say it doesn’t go far enough, and are pushing for mandatory restrictions similar to those enacted in Denmark, arguing that antibiotics should be allowed only for an animal that is genuinely sick.

Likewise, there are also concerns about animals being treated with hormones. Concerns about safety can apply to both the safety of the animal and for the end consumer who may ingest the residues remaining after the meat is sold.

Food Safety Modernization Act – 2011

The FSMA was signed into law by Pres. Obama in January 2011 and has proven controversial. Enacted in response to a number of publically highlighted cases of food-related illness, many believe FSMA is “overkill” with its heavy-handed regulations.

FSMA has a goal of increasing preventive measures to stop food safety problems before they happen. But to do this, it empowers the FDA to make myriad new regulations. These include, among many others:[[3]](#footnote-4)

* Requiring food facilities to produce written hazard control plans
* New standards for safe production and harvesting of fruits and vegetables, some of which go in to detail about exactly what can be applied to crops and when.
* Rules and regulations for supply chains that handle food, to prevent intentional contamination.
* Increased food facility inspections, including inspection of foreign facilities handling food for the US market
* New standards for laboratory testing of food
* Mandatory recall authority for the FDA to require that food be taken off the market when food safety issues arise.
* New rules about recordkeeping requirements for facilities handling items designated as “high risk” foods.

It would not be surprising to hear Affirmative cases this year to reverse some of the heavy regulatory burden imposed by the FDA under this law, arguing that the detrimental impacts of the regulation far outweigh the food safety risks they are designed to prevent.

Divided Responsibilities

There are at least five groups responsible for overseeing food safety and labeling in the United States today, creating the potential for overlap, confusion, or things falling through the cracks.

“Responsibility for the safety of food is split between different government agencies.

* [United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)](http://www.usda.gov/) The USDA is responsible for the oversight of all domestic and imported meat and poultry, including processed foods containing meat and poultry products, and processed egg products. The USDA also inspects animals before and after slaughter, inspecting meat and poultry processing plants (domestic and foreign), testing and analyzing samples, and seeking voluntary recalls if products are adulterated or misbranded.
* [Food and Drug Administration (FDA)](http://www.fda.gov/) The FDA is in charge of 80 percent of the food we eat, including most non-meat products. The agency’s main roles in ensuring food safety are to inspect food production and review food safety for new products. The agency can order a recall of unsafe products.
* [Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)](http://www.cdc.gov/) The CDC investigates and works with states to track foodborne disease outbreaks.
* State and Local Governments work with federal agencies to enforce and implement safety standards for fish, seafood, milk and other foods produced within the state border. State officials are also empowered to inspect retail establishments, dairy farms, milk processing plants, grain mills and food manufacturing plants. States can also stop, or embargo, the sale of unsafe food products within the state.
* State health departments are also on the front lines of investigating foodborne illness outbreaks and identifying the food making people ill.”[[4]](#footnote-5)

In addition to these, the Federal Trade Commission also plays a role in food safety by sharing jurisdiction with USDA and FDA in regulating food labeling.

Aquaculture & Fishing

Fishing might be considered a form of agriculture, so you may want to prepare for it by learning about current policies regarding fishing in open waters as well as controlled farming of fish in either fresh water or in the oceans near shore.

Aquaculture is “the rearing of aquatic animals or the cultivation of aquatic plants for food.”[[5]](#footnote-6) The practice has taken off in some other countries that don’t have the safety standards we have in this country. The federal government has just begun regulating offshore aquaculture, and it may be worth an investment of time for Affirmative debaters to determine whether it is being done safely, whether it is over-regulated to the point of killing the industry, or any other changes that might be made.

Ocean fishing is generally managed by the federal Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation & Management Act, which set up eight regional organizations to manage fisheries in different parts of US waters. The regional councils set fishing limits for quantity, season, equipment, etc. in an effort to maintain the sustainability of fish resources for future generations. In a few places, experiments have been done with privatized fishing quotas, also known as IFQs (Individual Fishing Quotas) or ITQs (Individual Transferable Quotas – fishing quotas that can be sold to other fishermen if the owner doesn’t want to use them himself).

In the case of a fishery managed by a general quota, the entire catch is capped at, say, 1 million pounds per season, and all the fishermen go out and fish until that quantity is reached. A “race to fish” ensues, since fishing will be stopped for everyone the moment the quota is reached. Every boat has every incentive to fish as fast and as hard as they can. Under an IFQ or ITQ scheme, each fisherman is assigned a personal quota to himself, assuring that he has the right to catch a certain number of fish total throughout the season. He now has no need to rush, since all other fishermen in the region are likewise limited by their individual quota, and he can fish more safely and responsibly.

The Consumer’s Right to Know

The existence of a consumer’s “right to know,” though not mentioned anywhere in the Constitution, has become almost an article of faith in modern times. Doubtless it could be invoked to justify many more forms of food labeling for every possible hazard, element of content, warning message, or anything else someone thinks should be disclosed.

Labels seem innocuous, but consumers often don’t realize they come with a cost. Food processors have to spend money to separate out foods containing different items that are required to be labeled differently (since they face heavy sanctions if anything is discovered labeled improperly). They must spend time and money developing and applying the right labels to the right products.

At some point, the labels become almost silly in the useless or obvious information they are required to convey. A can of peanuts carries the shocking allergenic warning label that the product contains peanuts. Whether in reaction to lawsuits or government regulations, sometimes labels throw so much useful and trivial information at us all at once that we become overwhelmed and simply ignore them.

And what is it that people think they have a right to know, and would they have enough knowledge to be able to use the information correctly? One study, while finding that 84% of the public wanted labels on foods containing genetically engineered ingredients, also found that 80% want food labeled if it contains “DNA.”[[6]](#footnote-7) Because, after all, people have a right to know.

Foreign Trade

Past debate resolutions in other debate leagues have generated debates about dangerous food products coming from China. While the US currently has a policy of holding foreign imported food to the same standards as domestically produced food, there could still be policy changes applied to foreign food that might attempt to improve food safety.

Some years ago, Congress implemented “Country of Origin Labeling” (COOL) on meats, to uphold the “consumer’s right to know.” It was challenged by Canada and Mexico, who argued that it was a violation of our commitments under the World Trade Organization (WTO). The WTO ruled in favor of Canada and Mexico and authorized those countries to begin implementing trade sanctions against the United States in retaliation. Congress headed off the sanctions by repealing COOL. Similar labeling requirements in the future would no doubt face the same issues.

Restaurants & Supply Chains

The federal government and the states already have extensive regulations on food prepared in restaurants as well as along the steps it follows in the supply chain from farm to table. But every new outbreak (e.g. Chipotle, 2015) raises questions about what more government could do to prevent future incidents.

Affirmatives may be exploring what additional inspections, regulations, or other safety precautions could be taken. These could happen inside the restaurant itself or at points along the transportation links that get the food from the farm, down the road, through whatever stops it makes, and into the restaurant kitchen. That same supply chain could also be examined for home food safety as well, since it will be vulnerable to the same types of issues.

Worksheet for Part II: Status Quo of US Food Safety Policies

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Read Part II. Answer the following in the spaces provided.

1. For how long have the US been modifying plants and animals through selective breeding and hybridization? Has there been scientific evidence that GE/GMOs risk health?

2. What are the four policy responses to the problem of GE/GMO foods?

3. What is the fear about antibiotics used on animals? What does the FDA currently do to solve that fear?

4. Do you believe the FSMA is heavy handed in its regulation of food safety? Which of the regulations do you believe went too far? Explain.

5. What does the USDA stand for and what is their function?

6. What does the FDA stand for and what is it in charge of?

7. What is the CDC and what does it do?

8. What is Aquaculture? Why is its success in other countries a problem for the United States?

9. Is a consumer’s “right to know” a Constitutional right? In your opinion, do you think Congress has overdone the idea of “right to know”?

10. What was COOL and why was it repealed?

Answers for Part II: Status Quo of US Food Safety Policies

1. The US has always modified plans and animals through selective breeding and hybridization. There has not been scientific evidence that GE/GMOs risks health, but the fear is still there.

2. The four policy responses to the problem of GE/GMO foods are (a) do nothing, (b) increase labeling requirements, (c) set standards for testing, and (d) ban them.

3. The fear about antibiotics used on animals is that its excessive use will create resistant bacteria that will spread to humans and cause incurable diseases with disastrous consequences. The FDA publishes voluntary guidelines intended to restrict farm antibiotic use.

4. Answers will vary.

5. The USDA stands for the United States Department of Agriculture. The USDA is responsible for the oversight of all domestic and imported meat and poultry, including processed foods containing meat and poultry products, and processed egg products.

6. The FDA is the Food and Drug Administration. The FDA is in charge of 80 percent of the food we eat, including most non-meat products.

7. The CDC is the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC investigates and works with states to track foodborne disease outbreaks.

8. Aquaculture is the rearing of aquatic animals or the cultivation of aquatic plants for food. Its success in other countries can be a problem in the US because other countries do not have the safety standards that we have.

9. A consumer’s “right to know” is not a Constitutional right. Answers will vary on whether Congress has overdone the “right to know” standard; some argue that the “right to know” has been overdone, leading to some of the examples listed in the article.

10. Congress implemented “Country of Origin Labeling” (COOL) on meats to uphold the consumer’s right to know. The solution was repealed after Canada and Mexico complained to the WTO, who ruled in their favor. Congress headed off sanctions by repealing COOL.

1. For a good summary of the 2014 Farm Bill, look here: <http://www.usda.gov/documents/usda-2014-farm-bill-highlights.pdf>. This page might provide numerous ideas to be researched for Affirmative cases to change one or more things on the list of programs it contains. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. A “monopoly” means there’s only one seller of something. Example: imagine if there were only one brand of chicken available in the grocery store, that brand would have a monopoly, and could charge higher than normal market prices. An “oligopoly” means there’s only a very few sellers, so they don’t really have to compete much on price, and might even collude with one another to fix prices and avoid competing. Example: two brands of chicken in the store. A “monopsony” means there’s only one buyer of something. Example: If there were only one wholesale processer of chickens that farmers could sell to. The monopsony buyer could demand an artificially low price, driving farmers out of business. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm239907.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <http://www.sustainabletable.org/501/food-safety> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. <http://www.memidex.com/aquacultures> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. https://reason.com/blog/2016/05/24/80-percent-of-americans-want-to-label-fo [↑](#footnote-ref-7)